

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Stackable Child Restraint For Aircraft

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 Safety seats or other restraint systems suitable for protecting young children from injury during transport in moving vehicles have, in the past, taken many forms. Generally adapted for transport in automobiles, the restraint devices have been bulky and cumbersome to relocate once installed into the automobile. Such existing seat safety structures are difficult to use when a
10 child is to occupy an aircraft seat and cannot be conveniently stored, because the construction does not permit integration of individual seat-type restraints into a volume less than a multiple of the volume required by each restraint.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

15 The present child restraint seat is one that can readily be used in conjunction with existing aircraft seats and seat restraints, specifically, the usual lap belt. It is also configured to be stored in nested or stacked condition, so that it can be stored on board aircraft, for use when required.

20 Broadly, the child restraint seat of this invention is a unitary or one-piece molded shell-like body which has flared or sloping side walls that enable a plurality of seats to be nested, one on top of the other. This construction enables a plurality of seats to be stored in a volume that is significantly more compact than is possible with prior existing constructions. The molded shell-like body has openings located at selected sites through which the customary aircraft lap belt can

be threaded to secure the shell-like body to the aircraft seat. The location of the openings permits the shell-like body to be placed either in a forward facing direction or in a rearward facing direction, as desired. Alternatively, the child restraint seat can be placed on an adult's lap and the aircraft safety belt used to both secure the adult and simultaneously secure the child restraint seat. Additional openings are located at appropriate sites through the shell for mounting a child restraint harness and a cushion on the shell-like body. The invention can be further understood by reference to the accompanying specification and drawings, in which:

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- 10 Figure 1 in a front perspective of the child restraint seat mounted on an aircraft passenger seat; Figure 2 is a perspective showing the back side of the seat of Fig. 1; Figure 3 is a side elevation of the child restraint showing a child in the safety seat in a rear-facing position; Figure 4 is a perspective illustrating a plurality of stacked restraint seats; and
- 15 Figure 5 is an end elevation, partly in section of the stack shown in Fig. 4.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

To more clearly define the invention, reference is made first to Fig. 1 of the drawings where the numeral 10 identifies a one piece molded, shell-like body that is shaped to support a child and to also be stackable. Body 10 has a first upwardly extending shell portion 11 that

20 defines a first surface 12 that is shaped to support a child's upper body part. Extending downwardly from the first supporting surface 12 is a second shell portion 15 which has a second surface 16 capable of supporting a child's lower body part. Extending upwardly and outwardly from first and second support surfaces 12 and 16 are integral support flanges 20 that are present

25 to provide support against lateral movement of the child's body.

First and second sidewalls 22 and 23 (see Fig. 2) are formed integrally with the first and second shell support flanges 20 and 21 and extend outwardly and downwardly from the support flanges. The side walls thus extend outwardly and downwardly to permit the shell like bodies to be stored in nested relationship. Located at the lower end of second shell portion 15 are openings 25 that are located at a preselected distance away from the first shell position 11. The selected distance is one at which the strap will exert pressure on the body 10 that urges the body 10 down against the aircraft seat and rearwardly against the aircraft seat back. The openings 25 are present in order that an aircraft seat safety belt 26 can be passed through the lower part of the one piece shell-like body 10 to secure the shell to an aircraft seat. It should be noted that the position of the body 10 as shown in Fig. 1 is located in a rearward facing position but that the position of the shell-like body could be reversed so that the concave part of the shell would be facing forwardly with respect to the back of the aircraft seat, as indicated by the dotted lines 27.

Structure has been provided in the shell-like body 10 to permit the mounting of a pad 35 and a restraint harness 36 that will hold a child's body in position within shell-like body 10. The mounting of the cushion and of the safety harness is enabled by the formation of a plurality of openings 37 through which the straps can pass. The straps are secured together on the rear side of support surfaces 12 and 16 as shown in Fig. 2 of the drawings. Figure 3 illustrates an aircraft seat 40 (illustrated by broken lines) which shows the manner in which a child 41 would be supported on the shell-like body 10 in a rear facing position. As can be seen the usual aircraft safety lap belt 26 is responsible for maintaining the child restraint seat in mounted position.

Figure 4 shows the manner in which a plurality of shells 10 would be superimposed one upon the other in nested or stacked condition for storage either on the ground or in a suitable

space on board the aircraft for use as needed. Figure 5 shows an end view, partially in section, of the shell body 10 of Fig. 5 as it would appear in the nested condition when in storage.